

enduring spirit and his strong character. I think we have to keep his spirit alive in our attitudes and in our actions.

I thank the Chair for her interest in another firefighter.

#### WIND ENERGY TAX CREDIT

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I now wish to turn to the wind production tax credit. The Presiding Officer has been in the chair listening on a number of occasions and she has been gracious in her interest and support of what we are trying to do.

This is my 26th speech urging all of us to extend the wind production tax credit. It is known simply as the PTC in the abbreviated form. It is going to expire in 4 weeks—less than 4 weeks, actually—if we don't extend it. I am so worried about what is going to happen to this important industry.

The PTC has created good-paying middle-class jobs in the wind energy industry not only in my own State—I have a bias about my own State—but all across the Nation. Almost every State has a stake in the wind energy industry. When we think about what the PTC has done, we realize it has also stimulated the growth of our clean energy economy as well as promoted clean energy security. The Presiding Officer serves on the Armed Services Committee so she knows the importance of energy to national security.

We have 75,000 jobs in the wind industry right now in Colorado. We are on track to produce 20 percent of our electricity through the wind, by harvesting the wind, by 2030. But if we let the PTC expire, estimates suggest we will lose half of those jobs. We would be down to 37,000 jobs. We also undermine our Nation's pursuit of true energy security.

Our inaction, although the tax credit hasn't expired, has halted further development in the wind energy industry because that set of leaders can't in good faith bring that capital to bear and make those investments if they think the wind energy credit will truly expire. We have had hundreds of layoffs in Colorado. The business has nearly ground to a halt, and we see that all over the country. Then we get a ripple effect in those communities because tax receipts go down, people aren't as upbeat about the future, and it is a downward spiral we have to end. We should be doing everything we can coming out of this tough economic recession—the great recession—to make strategic investments in our economy and in our energy portfolio.

So with that general outline of what we face, I wish to turn to the State of Maine today. The Presiding Officer and I have great respect for both of our Maine Senators. We are going to miss Senator SNOWE, and Senator COLLINS has been a strong supporter as well.

Maine is well positioned to become a major player in the wind energy industry going forward. Maine has the po-

tential for significant economic development and environmental benefits. In 2011, wind energy provided 2.9 percent of the Pine Tree State's power and Maine's wind farms power the equivalent of about 100,000 homes. The outlook for their wind energy industry is bright. The State has another 34 megawatts of wind power under construction and enough untapped potential to power three times the State's current electricity needs. Three times their needs will be powered by harvesting all the wind resources there. So I will say the PTC is crucial to their continued growth and the capacity they have to tap into their available wind resources.

Maine, of course, has a vast interior, but it also is on the coast. Right now Maine is New England's leading land-based wind producer, and experts predict it could become the leading offshore wind producer in the coming years. The University of Maine has a center called the Advanced Structures and Composites Center, and their research and development is paving the way for this additional offshore development.

There is also an expiring tax credit called the investment tax credit—the ITC—and that provides additional incentives. The ITC will be vital to the growth of offshore and distributed wind power development as well. It is also at risk. We need to include a discussion of the ITC as we consider the extenders package.

I have mentioned that what the wind projects do is to lift local economies. The Presiding Officer has a lot of rural economies in the north and the west of New York, a lot of agricultural-based economic activity. Wind power, when it is properly developed, is a cash crop that always comes in. As we face the consequences of this economic slowdown, wind power has helped a lot of local economies have additional revenue, economic activity, and jobs.

In that context, I wanted to talk about the Bull Hill Wind Project in Maine. It is in Hancock County, down here on the coast. I think it is called down east if one is from Maine. That project was just completed. It will generate \$100,000 annually in tax revenue, and it has supported about 100 jobs during the peak of the construction. That is a significant number of jobs in a rural county in a State such as Maine.

I have to put a pitch in for Colorado. This project uses wind turbines which are made by Vestas which manufactures blades, nacelles, and towers in Colorado.

Much like in Colorado, the production tax credit creates and sustains manufacturing jobs, and it is creating growth in Maine. I know we have some job numbers in the manufacturing sector that I will share with my colleagues. There are four facilities in Maine that produce components for the wind energy industry and the installed wind projects across the State to which I have alluded. Those jobs number

about 500—500 being actual jobs. Speaking of tax payments, property tax payments, about \$6 million comes in from those wind projects to local governments. That money helps infrastructure improvements and other vital services for local Maine communities.

So it is obvious that the growth of our domestic wind energy industry, aided by the wind production tax credit, has helped create jobs, encouraged energy security, and grown a clean energy economy in Maine and all across our country. It is really that simple. The wind energy PTC powers good-paying middle-class jobs. However, if we do not extend it—it is a bipartisan policy, by the way, and the father of the wind PTC is our own Senator GRASSLEY from Iowa—if we do not extend this, we are going to lose thousands of jobs. At a time when our economy is still in imbalance, that is not acceptable. It cannot happen in Maine, it cannot happen in Colorado, and it should not be happening to thousands of families across our country. So it is simple.

The PTC equals jobs. We need to pass it ASAP. Let's work together. Our inaction is stunting the growth of a 21st-century clean energy economic opportunity for us. Those jobs are not necessarily going to be lost if we do not do what we should do, but they are going to go to places such as China, Europe. The world is investing in big numbers in wind energy because of all the possibilities for economic development.

So let's, in sum, remember that the production tax credit equals jobs. The PTC equals jobs. Let's pass it as soon as possible. Time is running out. The clock is ticking.

I thank the Acting President pro tempore for her interest and for her support. New York has great wind energy potential.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### THE FISCAL CLIFF

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, I notice the Chamber is empty today, and I guess most of us are waiting to see if there is going to be an arrangement made between the President and Speaker BOEHNER on our fiscal cliff that is coming up in just a few weeks. I know all of us want to see that happen. I think each of us knows the very best thing that can happen for the economy in New York or Tennessee or any other place is for us to get this behind us and for businesses to begin this next year knowing that Congress and the White House have worked out an arrangement to put this fiscal issue in